

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET**

MAY 1995

HNC REVISION: 27 MAY 1997

TAG REVIEW DATE: 24 JUNE 1997

1. SITE NAME: Carlstrom Field

SITE NUMBER: I04FL011300

LOCATION:

City: Arcadia
County: DeSoto
State: Florida

PROJECT NUMBER: I04FL011302

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 3

ASR RAC: 3

TAG RAC: 5

2. POC's:

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ASR TAG REVIEW POC:

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3. SITE DESCRIPTION: The former Carlstrom Field included 696.36 acres of land in DeSoto County, Florida, consisting of 640 acres, Section 34, Township 38 South, Range 25 East, located 5 miles southeast of the city of Arcadia, and a 56.36 acre 30 foot wide railroad right-of-way connecting the Field to the City of Arcadia and Dorr Field. The 640 acre section of land is currently pasture, owned and managed by G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital. The 56.36 acre right-of-way, now devoid of railroad track, has reverted to the original owners and for the most part, are nearly indistinguishable from surrounding ranch land, citrus groves and melon patches. The site is located along State Road 31.

The nearest private residences are one quarter of a mile south of the field. Hospital housing is located within the grounds of what used to be the landing field. Citrus groves abut the western and southern perimeters of the site, while open ranch land borders on the east. The hospital and grounds lie just to the north, and beyond that, more orange groves. The landing field is open pasture for cattle, except for the acreage occupied by hospital residences. Citrus, melons and cattle are the major industries surrounding the site.

The general area is sparsely populated, very flat and clear-cut for the purpose of pasture, and cultivation. The site elevation varies at a rate of 4 feet per mile, in a southerly direction from the hospital to beyond the field boundary. During the site visit, the former flying field was boggy and was impossible to traverse without a four wheel drive vehicle. Much of the site is frequently flooded after heavy rainfalls. Drainage is effected by ditches which follow the site perimeter. A concrete pipe through the embankment on the west serves as a conduit between the field and the perimeter ditch.

4. SITE HISTORY: In late 1917 or early 1918, the United States leased 640.00 acres for an Army aviation training base. The lease contained an option to purchase, which was exercised on 8 April 1919 to acquire fee title to the 640.00 acres. Between 23 May 1920 and 18 May 1923, the U.S. acquired an additional 56.36 acres in easement, for a railroad right-of-way, bringing the total amount of acreage acquired to 696.36 acres. The site was developed and named Carlstrom Field.

The War Department constructed about 90 buildings and structures on the site which included a grassed airfield. This Army aviator training field remained active until the mid 1920s. The site was placed on an inactive status on 22 June 1922. Except for two structures, all improvements were disposed of by sale to private individuals for salvage and removed from the site by 3 March 1926.

Carlstrom Field was reactivated by the War Department in 1940 and utilized by the Army Air Forces, Fourth Service Command, as a primary pilot school for training Army Air Forces Cadets during World War II. On 24 December 1940, the War Department granted the Embry-Riddle Company a five year lease to Carlstrom Field for the purpose of conducting a civil flying school to provide flight training to the military students.

Embry-Riddle subsequently assigned the lease to the Defense Plant Corporation on 18 April 1942. The field served as a primary training school from January 1941 to its final deactivation in June 1945. The War Department declared Carlstrom Field surplus on 3 July 1945. On 29 September 1947, it was ceded to the State of Florida for use as a mental health facility. The 56.36 acres in the railroad right-of-way easement were allowed to revert to the then current fee owners when the U.S. ceased using the right-of-way to Carlstrom Field for railroad purposes.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA A

Size, Acres:	1
Former Use:	Ammunition Magazine
Present Use:	Fodder storage for cattle
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

AREA B

Size, Acres:	695.36
Former Use:	Airfield; Railroad Line
Present Use:	Grazing land; Cultivation; Hospital Grounds
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

6. CURRENT STATUS: The Archives Search Report for Carlstrom Field was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in May 1995.

7. STRATEGY:

AREA A: NOFA;(RAC 5)

AREA B: NOFA;(RAC 5)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The CEHNC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) recommended a strategy of no further action (NOFA) for this site. No OE was found during the visit by the site survey team. Lt. Frank G. West of the DeSoto County Sheriff's Department stated that his grandfather, Captain Frank G. Wittbecker, had told him a story of how he was in charge of burying ordnance at the site during the WWI era. This story could not be confirmed, and there were no further details regarding burial location and items buried. There are no historical documents which verify that any bombs were stored at the site. The former commander of the field during the WWII

era stated that there was no need for ordnance of any kind since the aircraft assigned were unarmed primary trainers.

The TAG determined that the burial story is not a valid reason to proceed with a strategy of EE/CA, RAC 3 as proposed in the ASR. An updated RAC Form with a RAC score of 5 is attached.

Potential Formerly Used Defense Sites: Five additional sites with potential for OE presence are identified and described in Table 5-1, Plate 5 and para 5b of the ASR Findings: (1)A small arms range of 320 acres presently used for orange groves and residential housing, (2)A strafing trough now used for pasture on the 2X4 (Carlton) Ranch, (3)A practice bombing range owned by Halden Thompson and used for pasture, (4)A dump used by the field and dating from WWI on the Carlton Ranch one quarter mile east of western boundary of Section 35, R25E, T38S, and (5)A dump at an orange grove by the small arms range. The ASR author speculates that the burial of OE might have been at the dump area identified at the Carlton Ranch. The Support District (ASR) POC must contact the Geographic District and provide notification of the above potential FUDS sites so that any required further action can be initiated.

Site Dangers: Alligators and poisonous snakes pose a hazard.

Natural Resources: Known State-listed species occur within the site area and are listed in para 3f, page 6 of the ASR Findings. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: NOFA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: NOFA

[Return to State List index page](#)

[Return to OE Home Page](#)